

Message Text

PAGE 01 ANTANA 01424 041122Z
ACTION OES-07

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 /018 W
-----080696 042251Z /70
R 040914Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY ANTANANARIVO
TO LINDSAY MCCLELLAND SEAN WASHDC TLX 89599
VIA SMITHSONIAN OBSY CAMBMASS
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 9543

UNCLAS ANTANANARIVO 1424

STATE FOR SCI-OST

E.O. 11652:N/A
TAGSC TPHY, MA
SUBJECT: METEORITE FALL IN MADAGASCAR

REFS: (A) RUEDDMA P 021330Z AUG 77; B) ANTANANARIVO 1401

1. UNIVERSITY OF MADAGASCAR OBSERVATORY IS MALAGASY GOVERNMENT ENTITY RESPONSIBLE FOR MONITORING AND INVESTIGATION SUCH PHENOMENA. DIRECTOR OF OBSERVATORY, FORMER U.S. GRANTEE, PROVIDED INFORMATION IN REF B WHICH HAS BY NOW APPEARED IN THE PRESS. HE IS PRESENTLY ABSENT FROM THE COUNTRY BUT WE ARE KEEPING IN TOUCH WITH ACTING DIRECTOR IN ORDER TO UPDATE THIS INFORMATION. THERE FOLLOWS LATEST INFORMATION WE HAVE CONCERNING FOUR QUESTIONS POSED IN REF A.

2. A. IMPACT OF WHAT IS BELIEVED MAY HAVE BEEN METEORITE REGISTERED ON OBSERVATORY SEISMOGRAPHS AT 1522 GMT JULY 30, OCCURRED WITHIN A 270-MILE RADIUS OF ANTANANARIVO, AND BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN IN AN EASTERLY DIRECTION. NOTE: THIS REPRESENTS SLIGHT CHANGE FROM INFORMATION IN REF A: DISTANCE REPRESENTS RADIUS WITHIN WHICH METEORITE MAY HAVE FALLEN RATHER THAN DISTANCE OF FALL. WE HAVE NO EXACT TIME OF SIGHTING OF FIREBALL BUT GENERAL CONSENSUS PUTS IT AT ABOUT UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 ANTANA 01424 041122Z

1515 GMT WITH TWO LOUD EXPLOSIONS OCCURING SEVERAL MINUTES THEREAFTER.

B. METEORITE NOT YET RECOVERED. A TEAM OF FOUR MEN FROM OBSERVATORY, TWO SEISMOLOGISTS AND TWO GEOLOGISTS, LEFT ANTANANARIVO AUGUST 2 FOR THE SEARCH, AND THEY ARE BEING ASSISTED BY THE MALAGASY ARMY'S SOVIET-DONATED MI-8 HELICOPTER.

C. EMBASSY SECRETARY, SHARON WELLS, IS ONLY EYE-

WITNESS WE HAVE SPOKEN TO WHO ACTUALLY SAW FIREBALL. SHE DESCRIBES IT AS THE SIZE OF A FULL MOON, PALE YELLOW-NEARLY WHITE IN COLOR, AND GOING IN DIRECTION OF NORTHEAST

BY NORTH, BASED ON THE DIRECTION OF THE ROAD ON WHICH SHE WAS DRIVING AT THE TIME. SKY LIGHTED UP BEFORE FIREBALL PERCEIVED, AND FIREBALL LASTED ABOUT TWO SECONDS AFTER SKY HAD BECOME DARK AGAIN. WHOLE EPISODE LASTED ABOUT FIVE SECONDS. OTHER EYEWITNESSES HAVE DESCRIBED FIREBALL TO PRESS AS STARTING OUT THE SIZE OF AN ORANGE AND GROWING TO SIZE OF FULL MOON. TWO DETONATIONS OCCURRED, NEARLY SIMULTANEOUSLY, SEVERAL MINUTES AFTER FIREBALL AND ARE VARIOUSLY DESCRIBED AS SOUNDING LIKE SONIC BOOMS, ARTILLERY SHOTS, BOMB EXPLOSIONS, OR QUARRYING DETONATIONS.

D. NO IMPACT EFFECTS YET AVAILABLE AS IMPACT AREA NOT YET LOCATED.BARRETT

UNCLASSIFIED

<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

Message Attributes

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Disposition Action: n/a
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